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# A WITNESS FOR WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

BY DR. WILLIAM J. ROLFE.

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THE Hon. Ignatius Donnelly's article in the December number of THE REVIEW adds nothing new to the Bacon-Shakespeare discussion. In replying to it, I shall begin with what I believe to be a "new departure" in the discussion. It would not be strange, however, if the proposed line of argument had been anticipated in some of the many articles on the "pro-Shakespearean" side which I have not read.

The fundamental assumption of Donnelly and the Baconians in general is that the Folio of 1623 was *edited by Bacon*, being a collection of his plays carefully revised, corrected, and put into the shape in which he desired to hand them down to posterity.

The Shakespearians, on the other hand, assume that the Folio is just what it purports to be—a collection of Shakespeare's plays made seven years after his death by two of his fellow-actors, who had no skill or experience in editing, and whose share in bringing out the book appears to have been limited to putting into the hands of the publishers the best copies of the plays they could get; these being partly manuscripts used in the theatre, and partly the earlier quarto editions of single plays, which had also been used by the actors in learning their parts.

The Folio is accessible, either in the original or in photographic or other *fac-similes*, to every reader of this REVIEW who may be interested in verifying my description of it. The cheapest of these reproductions of the volume can be bought at any bookseller's for two dollars and a half.

Now, I venture to assert that internal evidence shows, beyond the possibility of doubt or question, that the plays in the Folio could not have been carefully revised and seen through the press by their author or by any person who had had experience in editing, printing, or publishing. That Francis Bacon could have edited them or supervised their publication is inconceivable—except to a fool or a Baconian.

The Folio is a volume of about nine hundred pages (906, to be exact, including the page facing the title and occupied by Ben Jonson's verses in praise of the portrait of Shakespeare on the title), containing thirty-six of the thirty-seven plays commonly ascribed to Shakespeare ("Pericles" being omitted), arranged, as in the majority of modern editions, under the heads of "Comedies," "Histories," and "Tragedies." These three divisions are paged separately, but have no special headings, except in the table of contents, in which, it may be noted, the play of "Troilus and Cressida" is omitted.

The typographical execution, according to Collier (as quoted in "The Great Cryptogram," p. 550), "does credit to the age," being "on the whole, remarkably accurate." He adds: "So desirous were the editors and printers of correctness that they introduced changes for the better even while the sheets were in progress through the press." These corrections, however, are few and far between, and they are mostly of such palpable errors of the type as might catch the eye of the printer while working off the sheets.\* It should be understood, moreover, that Collier, like other Shakespeare editors, assumes that the Folio had no editing worthy the name, and that the "copy" furnished to the printers was mutilated manuscripts and wretchedly-printed quarto editions used in the theatre. The typographical faults and defects of the volume were due to the "copy" rather than to the printer. Grant White (see his *first* edition of Shakespeare, vol. i., p. cclvii.) says: "The defects and blemishes of the first Folio must

\*For instance, in the last scene of "King Lear" (see the Hon. A. A. Adee's scholarly introduction to the Bankside edition of the play, p. lxii.) the Phoenix Folio in the library of Columbia College has the stage direction, "*He dis.*" Dr. H. H. Furness's copy has "*He dies.*" Staunton's photographic *fac-simile* reads "*He dis.*" I suspect that here "*He dies*" is the earliest impression, and that the others are due to displacement of the type while the "form" was on the press. A clearer instance of *correction* is in the page-number 214 in the "Comedies," which appears as 212 in some copies. The numbers of pages 51 and 278 of the "Tragedies" are said also to vary in different copies.

be attributed merely to the lack of proper editorial supervision ; for its general appearance shows that it was designed to be a first-rate book for its day." The "defects and blemishes" he states thus :

"Beside minor errors, the correction of which is obvious, words are in some cases so transformed as to be past recognition, even with the aid of the context ; lines are transposed ; sentences are sometimes broken by a full point followed by a capital letter, and at other times have their members displaced and mingled in incomprehensible confusion ; verse is printed as prose, and prose as verse ; speeches belonging to one character are given to another ; and, in brief, all possible varieties of typographical derangement may be found in this volume, in the careful printing of which the after world had so deep an interest."

Craik, in his "English of Shakespeare" (Rolfe's edition, p. 15), says :

"As a typographical production it is better executed than the common run of the English popular printing of that date. It is rather superior, for instance, in point of appearance, and very decidedly in correctness, to the Second Folio, produced nine years later. Nevertheless, it is obviously, to the most cursory inspection, very far from what would now be called even a tolerably-printed book. There is probably not a page in it which is not disfigured by many minute inaccuracies and irregularities, such as never appear in modern printing. The punctuation is throughout rude and negligent, even where it is not palpably blundering. The most elementary proprieties of the metrical arrangement are violated in innumerable passages. In some places the verse is printed as plain prose ; elsewhere prose is ignorantly and ludicrously exhibited in the guise of verse. Indisputable and undisputed errors are of frequent occurrence, so gross that it is impossible they could have been passed over, at any rate in such numbers, if the proof-sheets had undergone any systematic revision by a qualified person, however rapid. They were probably read in the printing-office, with more or less attention, when there was time, and often, when there was any hurry or pressure, sent to press with little or no examination. Everything betokens that editor or editing of the volume, in any proper or distinctive sense, there could have been none. The only editor was manifestly the head workman in the printing-office."\*

Craik goes on to state some of the evidences which a "closer

\* The irregular *paging* of the Folio, which Donnelly believes to be an important feature in Bacon's cipher work, is merely another illustration of the lack of proper proof-reading. If it is a little worse than we find in the average book of the time, this is partly due to the separate paging of the three divisions ; partly, as we have reason to believe, to beginning work on one play in some cases before the preceding play was all in type ; and partly to doubts on the part of the editor or the head workman whether certain plays belonged in one division or another. "Troilus and Cressida," of which only the first two pages are numbered, was at first regarded as a *tragedy* and pretty certainly meant to be put after "Romeo and Juliet" (see my edition of the play, p. 11), but it was afterwards transferred to its present position between the "Histories" and the "Tragedies." The page-numbers were taken out, except the first two (and in the headline of these pages the play is still called a "Tragedie"), and there the work of correction was dropped.

inspection " reveals that the volume not only had no proper editing, but was put in type from imperfect " copy " obtained from the theatre. There are errors which cannot " be sufficiently accounted for as the natural mistakes of the compositor," and which " can only be explained on the supposition that he had been left to depend upon a manuscript which was imperfect, or which could not be read." It is a significant fact that " deformities of this kind are apt to be found accumulated at one place ; there are, as it were, nests or eruptions of them ; they run into constellations ; showing that the manuscript had there got torn or soiled, or that the printer had been obliged to supply what was wanting in the best way he could, by his own invention or conjectural ingenuity." \*

But the case of the Folio is in some respects even worse than Craik makes it out. He says, for example, that " in one instance at least we have actually the names of the actors by whom the play was performed prefixed to their portions of the dialogue, instead of those of the *dramatis personæ*"; and that this " shows very clearly the text of the play in which it occurs ( ' Much Ado about Nothing ' ) to have been taken from the playhouse copy, or what is called the prompter's book." In this play, a stage direction in act II., scene 3, reads thus in the Folio : " *Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Iacke Wilson.*" Jack Wilson was evidently the singer who took the part of *Balthasar*. Again, in act IV., scene 2, we find " *Kemp*" nine times and " *Kem.*" three times prefixed to *Dogberry's* speeches, and " *Cowley*" twice and " *Couley*" once to the speeches of *Verges*. William Kemp and Richard Cowley are known to have been actors of the time in London.

There are other instances of the kind apparently not known to Craik. In " 3 Henry VI," act I., scene 2, we find " *Enter Gabriel,*" instead of " *Enter Messenger,*" and " *Gabriel*" is the prefix to the speech that follows. Again, in act III., scene 1, of the same play, we read " *Enter Sinklo and Humfrey, with Crossebowes in their hands,*" where the modern editions have " *Enter two Keepers,*" etc.; and in the dialogue following we have

\* In an article on " The Text of Shakespeare," in " *The North British Review* for February, 1854, Craik has shown that the number of readings in the Folio which " must be admitted to be clearly wrong, or in the highest degree suspicious, probably amounts to not less than twenty on a page, or about twenty thousand in the whole volume."

"Sink." five times, "*Sinklo*" twice, and "*Sin.*" once for the 1st Keeper, and "*Hum.*" eight times for the 2d Keeper. The same *Sinklo* appears also in "The Taming of the Shrew," scene 1 of induction, "*Sincklo*" being the prefix to the speech of one of the players ("I think 'twas Soto," etc.). The 1600 Quarto of "2 Henry IV." has also, in act V., scene 4, "*Enter Sincklo and three or foure officers.*" He was evidently an actor of subordinate parts, and nothing else is known of him except that he played in "The Seven Deadly Sins" and in "The Malcontent" in 1604. In the "Midsummer-Night's Dream," act V., scene 1, the Folio has "*Tawyer with a Trumpet before them*" where the actors in the clowns' interlude first enter. Collier, Grant White, Dyce, and others believe *Tawyer* to be the name of the actor who filled the part of "presenter" and introduced the characters of the play.

There is another class of irregularities in the Folio which I do not remember to have seen classified, though the separate facts are referred to by many editors. "The Tempest," the first play in the volume, is divided throughout into acts and scenes. We have "*Actus primus, Scena prima,*" "*Scena Secunda,*" "*Actus Secundus. Scæna Prima,*" and so on to the end. The next three plays, "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and "Measure for Measure," are similarly divided. Then come five plays divided only into *acts*, though the first heading in two of them is "*Actus primus, Scena prima*"—"The Comedy of Errors," "Much Ado," "Love's Labour's Lost," "A Midsummer-Night's Dream," and "The Merchant of Venice." "As You Like It," which follows, has acts and scenes. In "The Taming of the Shrew" the induction is not marked, the play beginning with "*Actus primus. Scæna Prima.*" The next heading is "*Actus Tertia*" [*sic*] in the proper place; and further on we find "*Actus Quartus. Scena Prima,*" and "*Actus Quintus.*" "All's Well" is divided only into acts; "The Winter's Tale" into acts and scenes. The "Histories" are all divided in full, except "Henry V." (acts), "1 Henry VI." (decidedly "mixed"), "2 Henry VI." and "3 Henry VI." (not divided at all). In "1 Henry VI.," acts I. and II. are not divided into scenes; act III. is rightly divided; "*Actus Quartus. Scena prima.*" covers the first four scenes of act IV.; "*Scena secunda*" corresponds to scene 1 of act V.; "*Scæna Tertia*" includes scenes 2, 3, and 4;

and only the fifth scene is put under the heading "*Actus Quintus.*"

Of the "Tragedies," "Coriolanus," "Titus Andronicus," and "Julius Cæsar" are divided only into acts; "Macbeth," "Lear," "Othello," and "Cymbeline," into acts and scenes; "Troilus and Cressida," "Romeo and Juliet," "Timon of Athens," and "Antony and Cleopatra," into neither. In "Hamlet," three scenes of act I. and two of act II. are marked, the remainder of the play having no division whatever.

The only plays in the Folio which have lists of *dramatis personæ* (in every instance at the *end*) are "The Tempest," "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," "Measure for Measure," "The Winter's Tale," "2 Henry IV.," "Timon of Athens," and "Othello." In "2 Henry IV." and "Timon" a full page, with ornamental headpiece and tailpiece, is given to this list of "The Actors Names." The omission in the twenty-nine other plays cannot be due to want of space, as an examination of the book will show. In several instances an entire page is left blank at the end of a play.

The wretched editing—or want of editing—in the Folio is also shown in the retention of matter for which the author had substituted a revised version. We can easily see how this might result from the use of old stage manuscripts for "copy" in the printing-office. The revised passages were inserted in the manuscript, but the original form was allowed to remain. It may have been retained for the benefit of an actor who had already learned it, the later and longer version being the one which a new actor would learn. The two may have been distinguished by arbitrary marks in the margin, intelligible to the actors, but liable to be overlooked or misinterpreted by the compositor.

A notable example of such duplication of matter occurs in "Love's Labour's Lost," act IV., scene 3. In some modern editions the earlier version is omitted; in others (as in mine) it is enclosed in brackets. I will quote here only one of the bracketed passages, with the revised counterpart:

"For when would you, my lord,—or you,—or you,—  
Have found the ground of study's excellence  
Without the beauty of a woman's face?  
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:  
They are the ground, the books, the academes,  
From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire."

Further on in the same speech we read :

“For when would you, my liege,—or you,—or you,—  
In leaden contemplation have found out  
Such fiery numbers as the prompting eyes  
Of beauty's tutors have enriched you with?

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive :  
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire ;  
They are the books, the arts, the academes,  
That show, contain, and nourish all the world,  
Else none at all in aught proves excellent.”

In this instance the blunder of the compositor was committed in “setting up” the Quarto of 1598, which, as the repetition of sundry typographical errors proves, was used as “copy” for the Folio. The title-page of the Quarto—evidently a pirated edition—describes the play as “newly corrected and augmented,” and there are many indications of revision besides the one I have cited.

Again, in the last scene of “Timon of Athens,” the epitaph of the misanthrope reads thus (except in spelling) in the Folio :

“Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft ;  
Seek not my name. A plague consume you wicked caitiffs left !  
Here lie I, Timon, who, alive, all living men did hate ;  
Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait.”

We have here the *two* epitaphs given in North's “Plutarch” as follows :

“Now it chanced so, that the sea getting in, it compassed his tomb round about, that no man could come to it ; and upon the same was written this epitaph :

“ ‘Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft :  
Seek not my name : a plague consume you wicked wretches left.’

It is reported that Timon himself when he lived made this epitaph ; for that which is commonly rehearsed was not his, but made by the poet Callimachus :

“ ‘Here lie I, Timon, who alive all living men did hate :  
Pass by and curse thy fill ; but pass, and stay not here thy gait.’”

Shakespeare (or Bacon) cannot have meant to use both epitaphs. He seems to have written both in the manuscript while hesitating between them, and afterwards to have neglected to strike one out.

The printing of words and phrases from foreign languages in the Folio indicates wretched editing or proof-reading, or both.

Latin is given with tolerable accuracy, though we meet with *cruc's* like that in "Love's Labour's Lost," act I., scene 1, where *Holofernes* is represented as saying: "*Bome boon for boon prescian, a little scratcht, 'twil serue.*" This is in reply to *Nathaniel's* "*Laus deo, bene intelligo,*" which Theobald conjectures to be misprinted for "*Laus deo, bone, intelligo*"; with the response: "*Bone!—bone for bene! Priscian a little scratched; 'twill serve*"; that is, *Holofernes* takes *Nathaniel's bone* (which *he* means to be the vocative of the adjective) as a slip for *bene*, the adverb—which is natural enough, *bene intelligo* being a common phrase. Some editors, however, retain the *bene intelligo* in the preceding speech, and put the reply of *Holofernes* into French, thus: "*Bon, bon, fort bon, Priscian!*" etc. But the pedant does not elsewhere use French, and Latin would be more natural here.

French, Spanish, and Italian are almost invariably misprinted in the Folio, sometimes ridiculously so. In the "Merry Wives," for instance (act I., scene 4), "*un boitier vert*" appears as "*un-boyteene vert*"; and "*Ma foi, il fait fort chaud: je m'en vais à la cour—la grande affaire*" (Rowe's emendation), as "*mai foy, il fait fort chando, Je man voi a le Court la grand affaires*"; and "*un garçon*" (act V., scene 5) as "*oon garsoon.*" In "Henry V.," act IV., scene 5, "*O Seigneur! le jour est perdu, tout est perdu!*" is perverted into "*O signeur le iour et perdia, toute et perdie.*" The Italian *capocchia* of "Troilus and Cressida," act IV., scene 2, becomes *chipochia*; "*mercatante,*" in the "Shrew," act IV., scene 2, "*marcantant*"; and in "Love's Labour's Lost," act IV., scene 2, "*Venetia, Venetia, chi non ti vede non ti pretia*" (as it appears in Howell's "Letters" and in some modern editions, though others give it somewhat differently) is rendered "*vemchie, vencha, que non te vnde, que non te perreche,*" which exactly follows the Quarto of 1598, showing that neither the Folio printer nor the editor or proof-reader made any attempt to correct the fearful distortion of the Venetian proverb in the earlier edition used as "copy." Whether the "*Fortuna delarguar*" of the same play (act V., scene 2) is corrupt Spanish for *fortuna de la guerra*, or *del agua*, or *de la guarda*, the editors cannot decide; but it is probably the first, though it does not exactly suit the context.

It would take more than the entire space at my command to illustrate, even in this brief way, all the faults and defects of the

Folio, regarded solely from the printer's or proof-reader's point of view; but are not the facts already given enough, and more than enough, to settle the question whether the book is Bacon's?

Donnelly dwells much on "the extraordinary and phenomenal industry" of the man as shown in the elaboration of "the twenty volumes of his acknowledged writings." He tells us twice (pp. 286, 467) that Bacon "rewrote his essays *thirty times*," and "twelve times transcribed the 'Novum Organum' with his own hand." He might have added that the works which Bacon himself saw through the press are carefully printed. The reader can refer for illustration of this to Mr. W. Aldis Wright's accurate reprint of the 1625 edition of the "Essays," published by Macmillan. Few books printed nowadays are freer from errors of the type.

But, as Donnelly tells us, Bacon believed that his plays "would yield more lustre and reputation to his name" than his essays or his philosophical works, and he therefore took "the utmost pains" to publish these plays before his death. Can the Folio of 1623 be the fruit of the utmost pains of this phenomenally laborious scholar in a final edition of his greatest works? Would the man who rewrote the essays thirty times be compelled to go to the theatre for manuscripts of the plays to be used as "copy" by the printer? Would he read the proofs without detecting the repeated use of actors' names instead of those of the *dramatis personæ*? Could he overlook all the other imperfections and incongruities in the Folio which I have pointed out? In a carefully-revised edition could he fail to see and correct repetitions like those in "Love's Labour's Lost" and "Timon"?

If we assume the existence of a "cipher" in the Folio, such as Donnelly assures us that he finds, the absurdity of supposing the volume to be Bacon's becomes infinitely more preposterous. The insertion of this cipher, we are told, required the nicest care in the adjustment of every word in the original manuscript, and the minutest scrutiny of the proof-sheets as each page was printed. Every word had to be counted again and again; every instance of italics, brackets, and hyphens had to be noted in this repeated computation. Donnelly assumes that this was a task of almost inconceivable difficulty; and anybody at all acquainted with book-making can see that the cryptogramist must have re-

quired proof after proof in order to perfect this work within the work. Is it credible or supposable that Bacon could have thus painfully elaborated the narrative concealed in the text, and yet have left the text itself in the wretched condition in which we find it? Certain typographical errors are alleged to be due to the exigencies of the cipher narrative; but Donnelly will not pretend that more than an insignificant fraction of them can be explained in this way.

I have said that the merely typographical or mechanical imperfections of the Folio suffice to prove that the book is none of Bacon's. I have not referred, and shall now refer only in the briefest manner, to a wholly different class of facts that lead inevitably to the same conclusion. If the Folio were as well printed as any of Bacon's acknowledged works,—the "Essays" of 1625, for example,—there would still be internal evidence, abundant and decisive, that the volume cannot be the author's final revision of his dramatic productions. Certain of the plays are manifestly nothing more than a slight remodelling of earlier work by other hands. Others are apparently pieces left unfinished, and completed by another playwright—in some instances by one so inferior that the author cannot be supposed to have been a party to the transaction. If it be said that all the matter is from one and the same hand, this is not absolutely inconceivable if the collecting and publishing of the works have been done by an incompetent or unscrupulous editor after the author's death; but how can we explain it if the author himself is editor? Why, to refer to a single play, should "Timon of Athens" be left in the state in which the Folio gives it—pure gold with a large admixture of the basest alloy, stuff utterly unworthy the 'prentice days of the dramatist? Scarcely a critic of the present century has been willing to regard the play as the work of a single hand. Portions of it are written in the merest burlesque of verse—as if the author had no ear, unless an asinine one—and the thought and sentiment are in keeping with the versification; while other portions bear the marks of the poet's maturest period. According to the Baconians, this was one of the latest plays, if not the latest play, their philosopher wrote; and *Timon* is meant to represent himself, deserted by his parasite friends after his fall. Could Bacon have written it as we have it, or, if any inferior writer had a share in it, would Bacon have printed it all as his

own? These and similar questions have never been put to the Baconians, so far as I am aware, and I respectfully submit them to Mr. Donnelly's consideration.

On the other hand, let me ask the candid and unprejudiced reader whether these facts, and all the others concerning the Folio which I have mentioned, are not readily explicable on the theory that the volume contains the dramatic works of the dead Shakespeare, collected and edited by two of his fellow-actors, who were neither scholars nor critics, but did their share of the work to the best of their small ability.

If Bacon did not edit the Folio, he could not have inserted a cipher in it; but it may be well to examine the so-called cipher which Donnelly imagines he has discovered in the volume, and which he has described and illustrated in "The Great Cryptogram." His article in the last number of *THE REVIEW* is merely an additional chapter of this book, giving a fragment of a new "cipher story," which he has worked out by the methods employed in developing similar stories partially reported in the book. He has continued his cryptogramic study of the plays, he tells us, and the result is

"the astonishing discovery that every page of the play of 'First Part of Henry Fourth' on which a scene begins—and presumably every other similar page throughout the whole of the First Folio—produces a continuous cipher story, elaborated by a root-number which is obtained by multiplying the number of the page by the number of italic words on the first column of the page. In other words, that the cipher narrative given in 'The Great Cryptogram,' growing out of page 76 (of '2d Henry IV. '), multiplied by the number of bracketed words on column 74 (on which the scene begins), is but one of a series of cipher stories, woven through the text of these extraordinary works."

This proposition may, as Donnelly adds, "appear incredible on its face"; but we shall see, when we find out how the "cipher stories" are got, that the series might easily be extended indefinitely.

The "cipher" is no cipher at all, but an arbitrarily and almost infinitely variable method of counting the words of the text, by which any narrative whatever can be read into any printed matter whatever containing the *words* needed, however scattered, or any other words that can be combined or perverted into a punning resemblance to those needed. Let us look into Donnelly's own account of its discovery and application.

He suspected its existence more than a dozen years ago, and began to hunt for it in the winter of 1878-79, but it was five or six years before he got the clew. He began, as he tells us (p. 516 of his book) by looking for some such brief statement as "I, Francis Bacon, of St. Albans, son of Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England, wrote these plays which go by the name of William Shakespeare." Then he looked in the plays for such words as "*Francis, Bacon, Nicholas, Bacon*, and such combinations as *Shake* and *speare*, or *Shakes* and *pear*, as would make the name *Shakespeare*." He found them, of course, and then began to trace out numerical relations among them; but it was not until he got hold of the Folio of 1623 that he discovered "the root-numbers out of which the story grows"—namely, 505, 506, 513, 516, and 523—and the "forty or fifty starting-points" from which to count in finding the significant words. In his book (p. 583) he said that the root-numbers were "the product of multiplying certain figures in the first column of page 74 by certain other figures," which "multipliers" were said to be 10, 7, 11, and 18. It was objected that only one of the root-numbers could be the "product" of any of these multipliers; and Donnelly then gave, in a newspaper article, a wholly different account of the process by which the root-numbers were obtained. The "multipliers" were now said to be 12, 10, and 11, and one of the multiplicands the page-number 76. The product of 11 and 76 is 836, and from *this* he gets his five root-numbers by first subtracting 29, one of certain numbers he calls "modifiers," and then subtracting from the remainder, 807, the numbers 294, 291, 301, and 284, which represent the number of words in the first column of page 74, counted in various ways—with or without bracketed and hyphenated words, etc.

However the root-numbers may be obtained, it is evident that, with the many starting-points, the freedom in the use of "modifiers," the counting up or down, and the like, any word in the Folio text can be forced into its place in the narrative supposed to be concealed there. It would take too much space to show how arbitrary are the methods by which the successive words are figured out; but the peculiar "hop-skip" movement may be illustrated by the way in which Sir Thomas Lucy's name is deciphered on page 777. The *Sir* is the 217th word in the first

column of page 77 of the text, or 77, 1, concisely expressed. *Thomas* is ingeniously made up of *to*, the 49th word in 76, 1, and *amiss*, the 189th in 76, 2. *Lucy* is a combination of *loose*, the 77th word in 74, 2, and *see*, the 384th in 75, 1. No two of the words are obtained by similar counting; and Donnelly's own explanations and comments make it clear that the variations are not according to any fixed rule. The numbers of the words are all got, he says, from 305 by subtracting "modifiers." For the 217 of *Sir*, 31, 50, and 7 (the number of bracketed words in the column) are subtracted; but no reason is given, or can be given, for selecting 77, 1, as the column in which the 217th word is taken. For the 49 of *to*, 31, 50, 30, and 145 are successively subtracted, and the 76, 1, column is arbitrarily chosen as the one from which to take the 49th word. For the 189 required to get *amiss* in 76, 2, the 305 is successively diminished by 31, 30, 5 (bracketed words), and 50. For the 77 of *loose*, we subtract 31, 50, and 50 from 305, then subtract the remainder, 174, from 248 (the whole number of words in 74, 2), leaving 74, to which 1 and 2 (hyphenated words in the column) are added. For *see*, it is necessary to subtract 31, 50, and 30 from 305, leaving 194; then to double this 194, and subtract 4 (hyphenated words) from the product. This done, 75, 1, is selected as the column in which the 384th word is taken. Five radically different arithmetical processes, each evidently independent of the others, are thus used to get the numbers for the syllables of *Sir Thomas Lucy* in the distorted form of the name, and the counting is done in five different columns of four different pages. Nothing can be clearer than that the cryptogramist first assumed or suspected that the name of *Sir Thomas* was somewhere concealed in this portion of the text; that he then hunted up his *Sir* and *to-amiss* and *loose-see*, and manipulated his figuring to fit their positions in the columns where they occur.

The cipher narrative abounds in superfluities, not only of words and phrases, but of paragraphs and, indeed, entire chapters. Donnelly tells us (p. 239), that it "probably gives us the whole history of the reign of Elizabeth." It also gives us a most minute biography of Shakespeare from his youth up (and of his wife as well), with all the particulars of his connection with the plays, including the Queen's attempt to apprehend him on account of political matter in them which offended her, and

Bacon's fear that Shakespeare would reveal their true authorship, his sending Harry Percy to urge Shakespeare to run away, etc., etc. The words of the text are used over and over again in relating all this, and the infinite labor involved in the undertaking is not ignored. Donnelly says (p. 574) that the play of "2 Henry IV." is "a most carefully-constructed piece of mosaic work, most cunningly dovetailed together, with marvellous precision and microscopic accuracy; there is not one cipher, but many ciphers in it; it is a miracle of industry and ingenuity." Again he says (p. 865): "In short, every act, scene, fragment of scene, column, word, bracket, and hyphen, in all the pages of these two plays [the two parts of 'Henry IV.'], and, as I believe, of all the plays, has been the subject of the most patient, painstaking prevision and arithmetical calculation and adjustment, to a degree that is almost inconceivable."

It is not almost but altogether inconceivable. Mr. W. H. Wyman, an expert in the typographic art, has shown (in the *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette* for June 4, 1886) that Bacon's preparation of his manuscript, as imagined by Donnelly (pp. 560-562 and elsewhere), is "a simple impossibility"; and that the putting it in type, so as to make the printed page correspond in its cryptographic details to the written page, is another impossibility. "If not a mechanical impossibility, it is so practically, if not absolutely, and no one who attempted it would have the courage or the patience to carry it beyond the first page on which he tried the experiment."

Donnelly, however, would have us believe that Bacon not only attempted this insertion of a multiplicity of intertangled "cipher stories" in the Folio, but wantonly augmented and complicated the task by including in these stories many irrelevant and insignificant details, and wasting words recklessly in these as in all other parts of the "concealed matter." This is illustrated even in the "Francis Bacon, Sir Nicholas Bacon's Son." Was it necessary to state that he was the son of Sir Nicholas? Would Donnelly have thought of making Bacon state it if he had not chanced to light on that *Nicholas* while hunting for the cipher? But this is trivial in comparison with the poor stuff spun out elsewhere in the narrative; as, for instance, in Harry Percy's account of his visit to Shakespeare at Stratford. Shakespeare told his wife to get some supper for

Bacon's messenger ; and " then follows," says Donnelly (p. 874), " with great detail, a description of the supper, served by the handsome Susannah ; and every article of food is given, much of it coarse and in poor condition ; and Percy is vehement in his description and denunciation of the very poor quality of the wine, which was far inferior to the kind that was served at his spendthrift master's table." And that spendthrift master, no less prodigal of misdirected labor, wasted many weary hours in working these petty details into the Folio text for the entertainment of posterity ! Elsewhere (p. 807)) our philosopher digresses into a lengthy account of the introduction of the " French disease " into England—suggested by Shakespeare's having the disease ; " and," says Donnelly, " the fact that Bacon could stop in the midst of his cipher narrative to give these details as to a most shameful but most destructive disorder, is characteristic of the man who, in his prose history of Henry VII., paused to describe the great plague which decimated London in that reign." It is also characteristic that " he goes on to tell the mode of treatment for the shameful disease in question " !

The waste of words—these carefully-counted and ingeniously-adjusted words—is yet more remarkable where they do not even serve to give us these petty or useless details, but are the merest verbiage. On page 738, for instance, we read : " He drew his pistol, and shot him, and, *as ill luck would have it*, the ball hit him on the forehead *between the eyes*" ; and the superfluous italicized words are scattered through pages 71, 74, and 75 of the Folio. It would have saved Bacon much figuring and fussing over these pages if he had simply written, " drew his pistol and shot him in the forehead." That tautological cryptographer, in describing Shakespeare's encounter with Sir Thomas Lucy's game-keepers,—a needless episode in the narrative,—can afford to write a sentence like this (p. 742) : " He hath beaten one of the keepers *o'er the head, sides, and back with the blunt edge of his stick till it breaks, or he fell down to the earth under the heavy weight of his blows*" ! It takes an octavo page full of figures to show how Donnelly dug the useless words out of four pages of the Folio ; and Bacon had to perform all that calculation and much labor besides in hiding them there. He could actually write like this (p. 753) : " After quenching the fire, *the flames of which even yet burned*" !

I fear, however, that we must give Donnelly, and not Bacon,

the credit of originating this extraordinary narrative. He has read it into the Folio before ciphering it out again. It is written in *the English of the nineteenth century*, not the sixteenth. This has been shown again and again, though I believe that I may claim to have been the first to discover an unquestionable *Americanism* in the thing. Shakespeare, to revenge himself on Sir Thomas Lucy, as we are told, drains his fish-pond (p. 697) "and *girdles* his orchard." It is unnecessary to inform the reader that this use of *girdle* originated in this country long after Bacon was in his grave, and that it would be unintelligible to most Englishmen to-day.

The only reply that Donnelly has been able to make to this and similar criticisms is to say that "the *words* are all in the Folio." Verily they are; and in "Troilus and Cressida" (act II., scene 3) there is reference to "an engine not portable"; and in "2 Henry IV." (act IV., scene 1) "rocky mountains" are mentioned. This, however, will hardly justify Donnelly in making Bacon allude, in some future chapter of the cipher narrative, to a "portable engine" in the familiar modern acceptance of the term, or to the "Rocky Mountains" of our American continent.

Donnelly's ignorance of Elizabethan English is amazing. In his much counting of the Folio words he has failed to learn their meaning and use. He tells us that Bacon was sometimes hard-pressed by the exigencies of the cipher, and actually wrote nonsense on a pinch in order to get the right word, cryptographically speaking, in the right place. On page 536, "I *con* him no thanks for it," and "Yes, thanks, I must you *con*," are quoted in illustration of this. The expression, he says, "is sheer nonsense." It was, nevertheless, common in Shakespeare's time, and Steevens and other commentators cite many examples of it from contemporaneous writers. In "2 Henry IV." (act II., scene 1) *Falstaff* says, referring to *Dame Quickly*, "Throw the quean into the *channel*"; and Donnelly—who, by the by, says that the *Quickly* "threatened to throw the corpulent *Sir John* into the channel"—thinks that *channel* is here a word without proper meaning, introduced by Bacon because he has occasion to refer to the English Channel! For *channel*=*kennel*, or gutter, with sundry old and well-known compounds and derivatives from it, Donnelly may be referred to any good English dictionary. On page 872 he quotes one of the thirty or more passages in which

Shakespeare uses *owe* in the sense of *own*. He has found a mare's-nest; "the text is twisted to get in the word." Bacon needed it for the cipher, and got it "by misspelling a word in the text." Here, too, the dictionary may be commended to our cryptogrammist, who will learn from it that the original meaning of *owe* was "have, possess." He will find the word with this sense in the English Bible (edition of 1611), Leviticus, xiv., 35, and Acts, xxi., 11; but Donnelly may yet prove that Bacon wrote King James's version, and put a cipher in it, just as he wrote Shakespeare's plays, and Marlowe's, and Montaigne's essays (that is, Florio's pretended translation, which Bacon got the Perigourdin gentleman to translate into French and claim as his own), and Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy."

I may remark here that Donnelly's chapter on "Other Masks of Francis Bacon" (pp. 939-974) is indirectly fatal to the cipher theory, though he does not see it. We are told here that Bacon wrote not only all the dramatic and other works just mentioned, but all the so-called "doubtful plays" (at one time and another ascribed to Shakespeare), fifteen in number,—"*Arden of Feversham*," "*Lochrine*," etc.,—and probably also the plays supposed to be written by Marston, Massinger, Middleton, Greene, Shirley, and Webster. Both Donnelly and Mrs. Pott recognize "Baconianisms of thought and expression" in all these plays. That the Montaigne "*Essays*" and the "*Anatomy of Melancholy*" are Bacon's is proved by many cryptic allusions to them in the Folio, by similar allusions to *Shakespeare* and *Verulam* and *St. Albans* in the books themselves, and by the "parallelisms" of style, to which a dozen or more pages are devoted in this chapter of "*The Great Cryptogram*."

In other words, we have just the same grounds for believing that Bacon wrote all these books ascribed to Marlowe, Montaigne, Burton, and the rest, that we have for believing that he wrote Shakespeare's plays and poems! Here I can heartily agree with Donnelly. If Bacon wrote any one of these things, he unquestionably wrote them all—and any other Elizabethan literature that Donnelly or anybody else will take the trouble to analyze and "decipher" after the same fashion.

It is proper to say, in conclusion, that I cannot agree with those who doubt Donnelly's sincerity. I believe him to be thoroughly honest, though amazingly deluded.

W. J. ROLFE.